



SUGGESTED FOR MATURE READERS
\$2.00 US • \$2.50 CAN • £1.00 UK

HEPCATS

martin wagner

5

SAVE HEEPCATS NOW!

Sorry about the alarmist headline there, but I really need everyone to read this page, the reasons for which will become obvious momentarily.

It should come as no surprise to anyone who likes black and white comics, and who has been keeping up with the nature of the business of late (it's for shit) and the recent spate of cancellations, that the reason you've had to wait forever for *this* issue of *Hepcats* is purely one of finances. In short, Double Diamond Press's financial situation stinks, and if *Hepcats* is going to survive, I'm going to need a bunch of help right quick. When prominent independent publishers like Kitchen Sink and Fantagraphics are axing books left and right, you can understand how hard it is for a one-man operation like myself to stay bouyant—especially when my distributors tell me that even with sales in the 3,000 range, I'm *outselling* many of those publishers' books! And with every Bigtwo cash cow that hits the stands (most recently Studd McFarlane's *Spider-Man* #1, with that—*gasp!*—silver inked cover; how dare Stan the Man steal ideas from me!), well, that's another half-dozen or so small press publications, put out by people who sweat and *care*, for god's sake, that are going to an early grave. Because this industry now is basically set up to kill any book that isn't in color and that isn't about superheroes.

But not *Hepcats*. I'm not going down without a fight. In fact, I'm not going down at all, goddammit! I wave my private parts at your aunties, Marvel. You too, DC! Your mother was a hamster and your father smelled of elderberries!

(But, er, confidentially, folks, I can't do this alone. At all. I've got to have help. Period.)

And so, in order to inaugurate the Save Hepcats Campaign, I'm offering a bunch of enticing new mail-order stuff that should rattle your trap something fine! And, yes, personal checks are okay again. I promise.

In addition to *Yo*, of which I have about 380 copies or so remaining, the new mail-order items include mail subscriptions, the first *Hepcats* T-shirt (pre-orders being taken now; available in June), and, what I predict will be the most popular offer of all, original sketches in color.

Now, what I'd really like everyone to do, every single one of you, is to read the rest of this really carefully, because I'm basically going to lay out the whole situation for you up front. And then I'd like everyone to find at least *something* you'd like to order, in an effort to keep us going. Because I don't just need 10 or 20 people helping out. I don't just need 90 or 100 people helping out, either. I basically need every single person who can possibly afford to contribute something to the kitty to please do so, and to do it today. Otherwise, I can't vouch for the future of this book with much confidence. Sure, I could fight it out on my own, that is, if you don't mind reading only two issues a year. But with a big show of support, I can get this thing out every other month like it should be, and we can all collectively thumb our noses at the Big Indifferent Machine that is the comics industry.

After all, why should *Spider-Man* and *Dark Knight* fans be the only comics readers who have a right to a continuing series? Just because an alternative comic doesn't have a print run in the half-million range doesn't mean it deserves to be wiped out by, of all things, a lack of capital for printing.

And how many times have you and your friends said something like this: "Wow, you know, I was really getting into this new series I discovered, but damn if it didn't belly up after three issues. Oh, well. Maybe something else'll come along in another four years." Too damn often, right? Well,

FIGURE ONE

TENTATIVE 1990 SCHEDULE FOR DOUBLE DIAMOND PRESS

MAY	Hepcats 1 (reprint)
JUNE	Hepcats 6 Erica T-shirt
AUGUST	Hepcats 7 Possible second T-shirt
SEPTEMBER	Surprise Joey & Gunther book in prestige format
OCTOBER	Hepcats 8
NOVEMBER	Lovestupid
DECEMBER	Yo (reprint) Hepcats 9

PLEASE HELP TODAY SO I CAN DO THIS!

here's something new. Unlike those books, with *Hepcats* I'm offering you a chance to do something about it!

And the thing is, once you see how easy saving *Hepcats* is, and what all I have to offer you, I think you'll want to contribute. I hope.

It's like this.

I've worked out that in order to stick to the schedule outlined in Fig. 1 up there, I need to get my hands on a quick ten or twelve grand. If that sounds like an unapproachably high sum, rest assured that in publishing it's diddly-squat, and you can believe Stan Lee wipes his ass with \$100 bills.

Now, in order to get \$10,000, all I'd need would be for either 400 people to order color sketches, or 371 people to order a 12-issue subscription.

Bingo. *Hepcats* lives.

See? That's so within reach.

But of course, to keep going for years and years and years and years, we can't just stop at the 371 or 400 count. We *all* need to contribute. I mean, you know it can go: everybody decides, *Well, everyone else is going to help so I really don't need to do anything*. Consequently, no one contributes and the book wheezes and croaks. But I'm not really worried about that because all of you have been so supportive already that it's almost embarrassing pulling this televangelist routine on you. (I've yet to turn a profit on any issue, you might like to know; *Yo* orders have been putting groceries in the fridge.) But I figure I have to be honest, and if you've read the series up to issue 5, I figure that you've decided you must like it well enough to keep going, and want to keep it alive. So that's why I'd really be grateful if we could all pull together on this one and show the comics world a thing or two! Okay? Okay?

Now, I've anticipated a lot of your questions already. As per sketches, I'm sure a lot of you are probably saying, "Okay, sure, I'd like one, but if everybody ordered sketches like you said, sure, you'd have a lot of money, but when the hell are you gonna find time to draw 400 sketches, much less 3,000?" Good point. Well, for one thing, yes, those of you who do

continued inside back cover

HEPCATS BY MARTIN WAGNER
NUMBER 5

Snow blind

A NOVEL IN 18 CHAPTERS
DOUBLE DIAMOND PRESS
AUSTIN, TEXAS

Synopsis

Erica has been hospitalized following a near drowning that her doctor believes was a suicide attempt. As Arnie tries to come to terms with this possibility, the narrative flashes back a week or so before the story opens to a day before Christmas of 1988, when Arnie and Erica have a shopping trip planned with Joey and Gunther. Arnie tells the guys of his and Erica's wedding plans for the following summer, and also mentions that he plans to go ahead and buy Erica's ring that day as a surprise. At the mall, everything is going well until Erica notices a familiar face in the crowd, panics, and runs, leaving her companions wondering what is going on....



HEPCATS 5

Created, illustrated, and published by **MARTIN WAGNER**

**PRINTING & SHIPPING
PORT PUBLICATIONS, INC.**

*125 E. Main St.
Port Washington, WI 53704*

Circulation this issue 3,250

DISTRIBUTED BY

ACTION DIRECT

Kansas City, Kansas

ANDROMEDA PUBLICATIONS, LTD.

Toronto, Ontario

CAPITAL CITY DISTRIBUTION, INC.

Madison, Wisconsin

DESTINY DISTRIBUTORS

Kirkland, Washington

DIAMOND COMIC DISTRIBUTORS, INC.

Baltimore, Maryland

HEROES WORLD DISTRIBUTION CO.

Randolph, New Jersey

MULTI-BOOK AND PERIODICALS

Burlington, Ontario

SECOND GENESIS

Portland, Oregon

STYX INTERNATIONAL

Winnipeg, Manitoba

HEPCATS (ISSN 1045-201X) is published bi-monthly by Double Diamond Press, 7117 Wood Hollow Dr., #1728, Austin, TX 78731. All contents copyright © 1990 by Martin Wagner. The title HEPCATS and the likenesses of its characters are trademarks of Martin Wagner, and their unauthorized use is prohibited by law. Single copy price \$2.00 in the United States, \$2.50 in Canada, and £1.00 in the United Kingdom. Unauthorized reproduction of any of the contents of this book by any means is prohibited, except by reviewers who may excerpt some panels for the purposes of a review.



BRRING
BRRING

KLIK

HEY, THIS
IS ARNIE! DON'T
YOU JUST HATE
THESE MACHINES?
WELL, LEAVE ME
A MESSAGE
ANYWAY AND I'LL
GET BACK TO
YOU.



BEEBEEP

HEY, ARN!
IT'S GUNTHER!
YOU HOME?

WAKE UP,
LAZY-ASS!



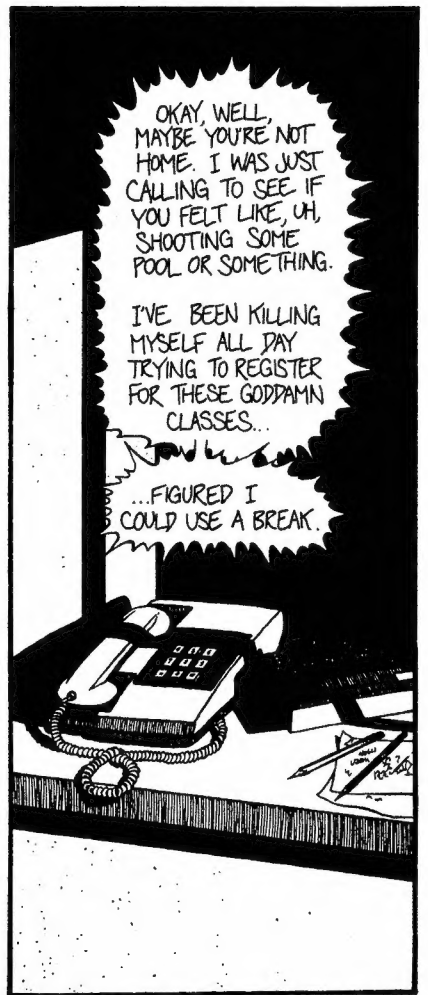
CHAPTER III
Faces and Traces

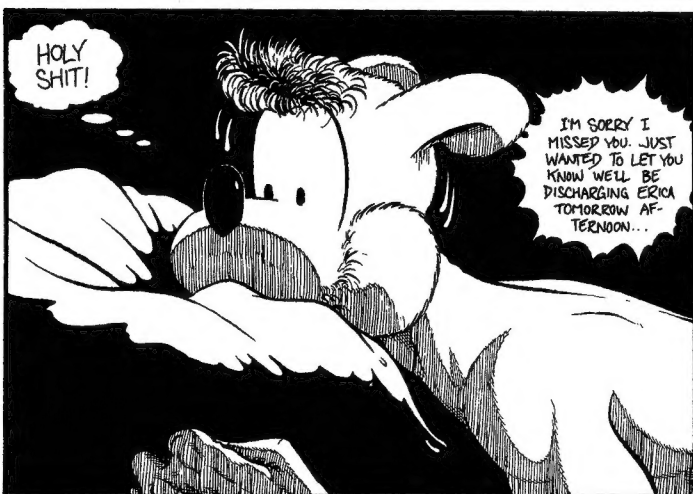
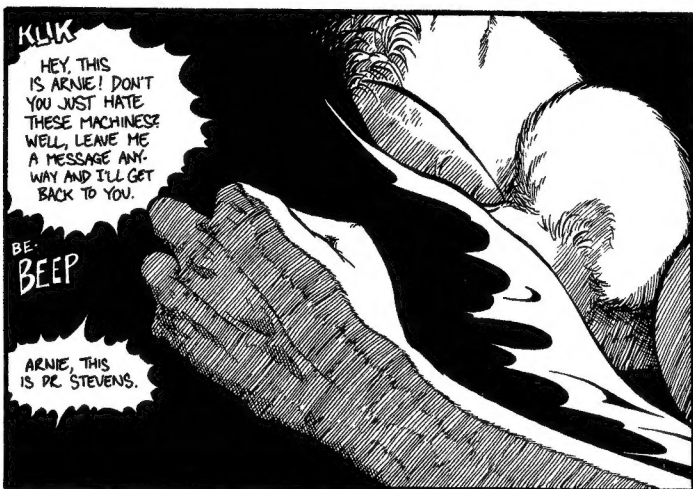
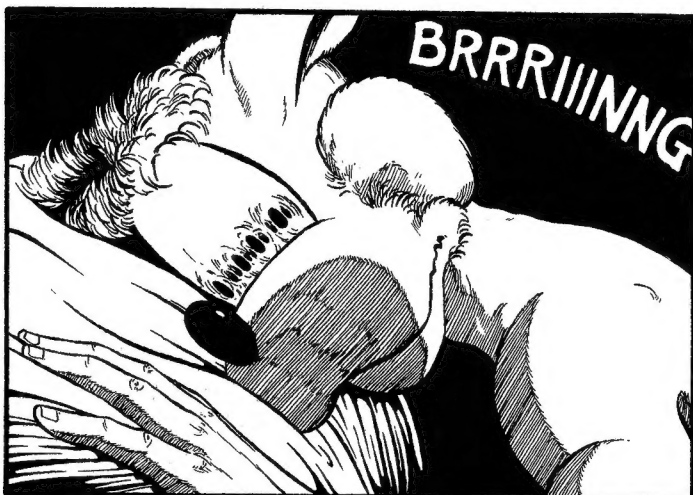
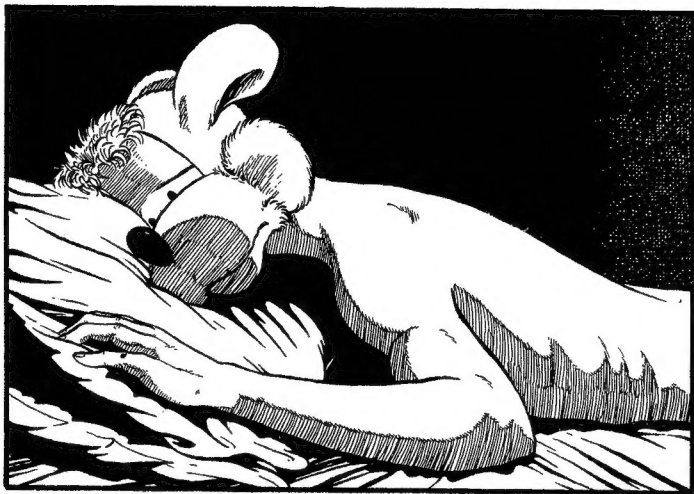
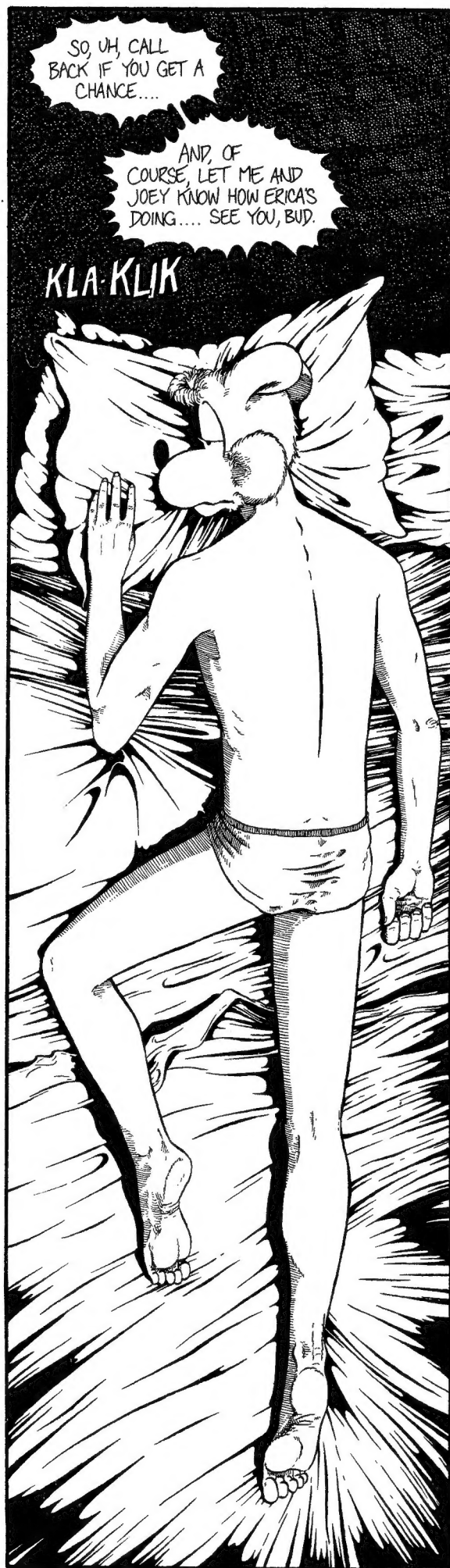


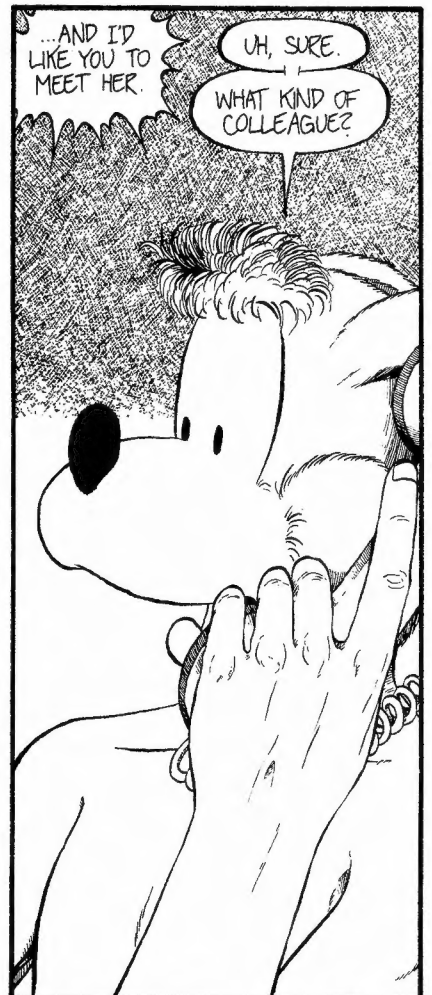
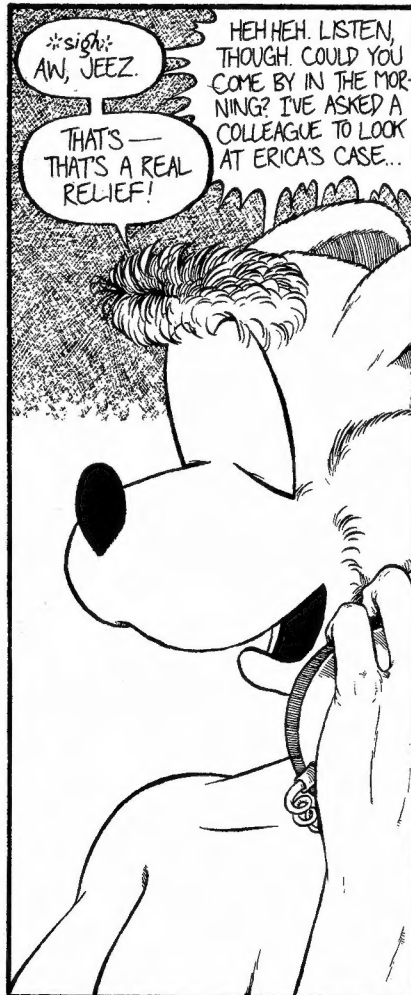
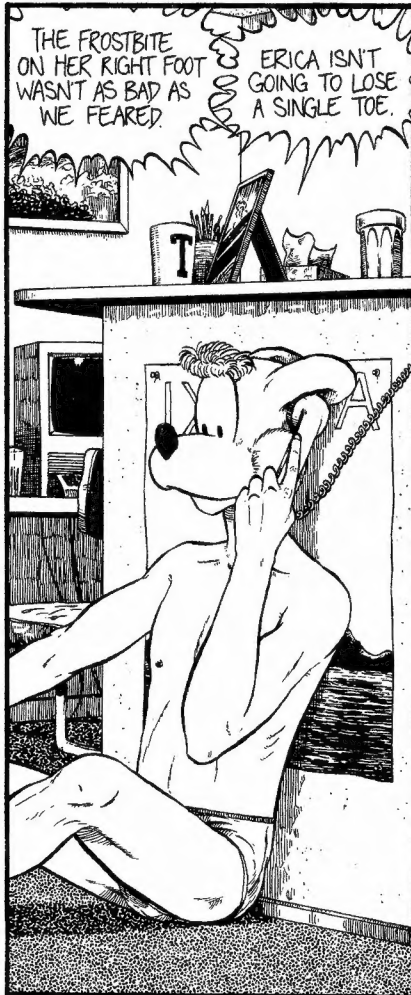
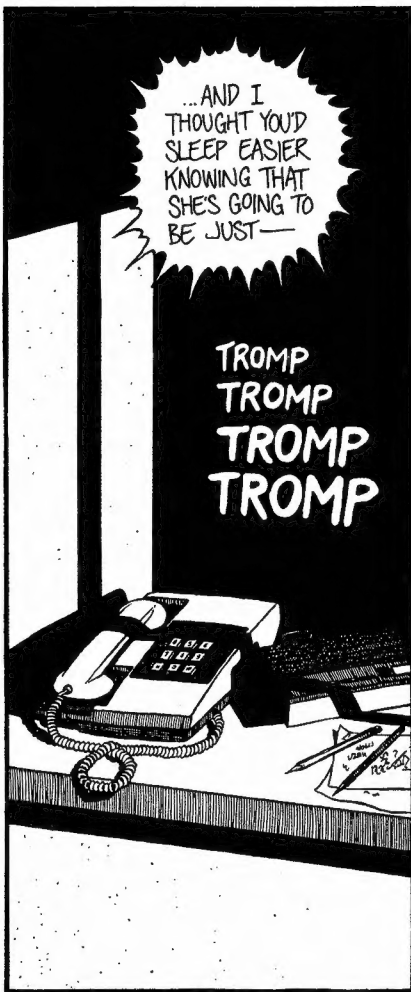
OKAY, WELL,
MAYBE YOU'RE NOT
HOME. I WAS JUST
CALLING TO SEE IF
YOU FELT LIKE, OH,
SHOOTING SOME
POOL OR SOMETHING.

I'VE BEEN KILLING
MYSELF ALL DAY
TRYING TO REGISTER
FOR THESE GODDAMN
CLASSES...

...FIGURED I
COULD USE A BREAK.



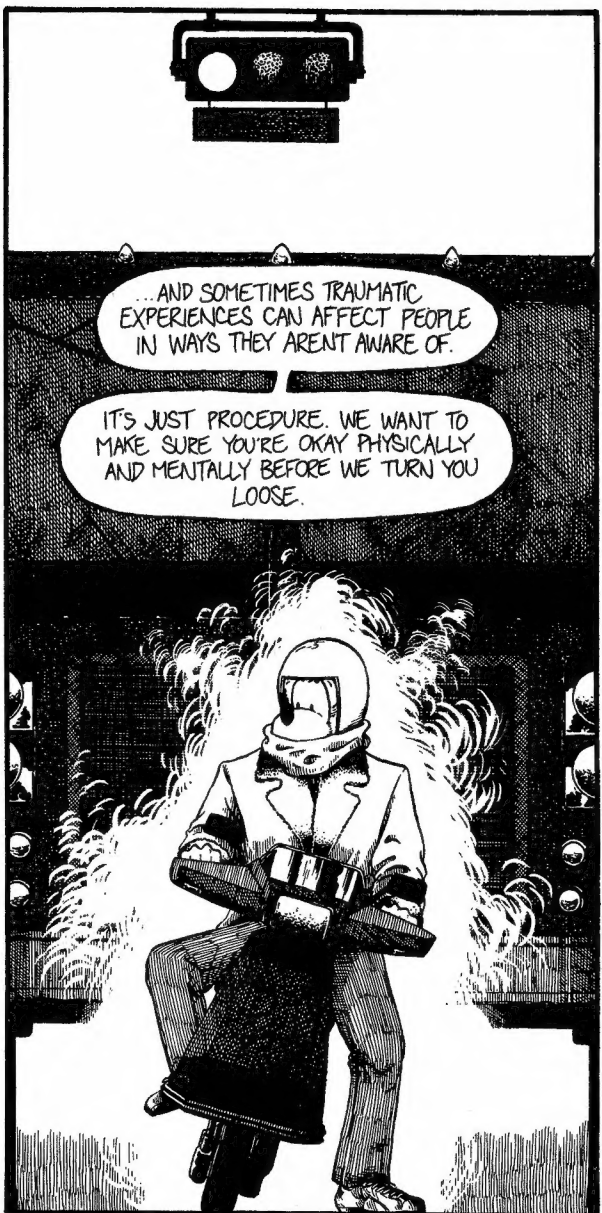






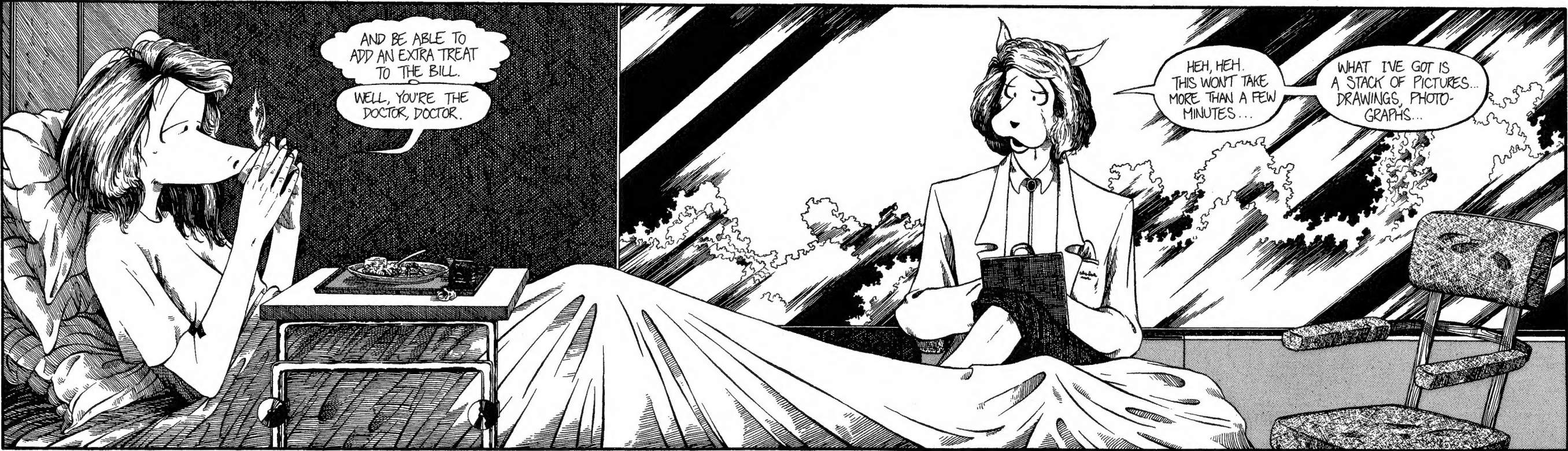
IS THIS REALLY NECESSARY? I MEAN, I FEEL GREAT!

WELL, THAT'S TERRIFIC, ERICA. BUT YOU HAD A PRETTY ROUGH EXPERIENCE OUT ON THAT LAKE, YOU KNOW....



...AND SOMETIMES TRAUMATIC EXPERIENCES CAN AFFECT PEOPLE IN WAYS THEY AREN'T AWARE OF.

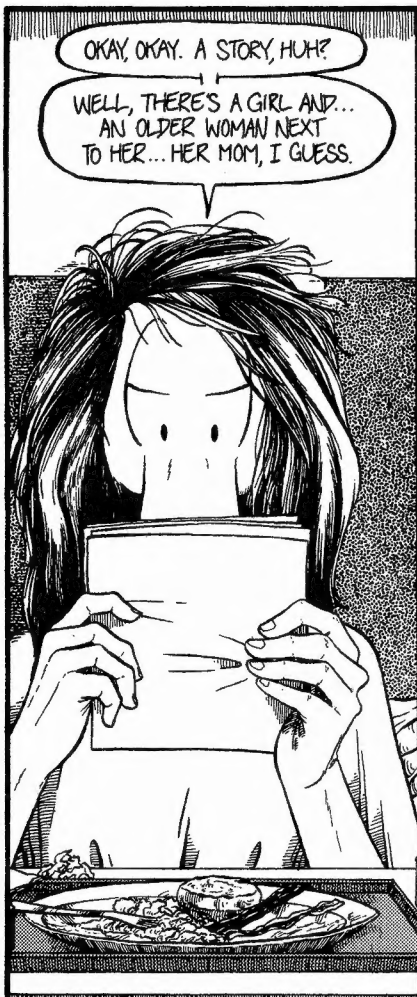
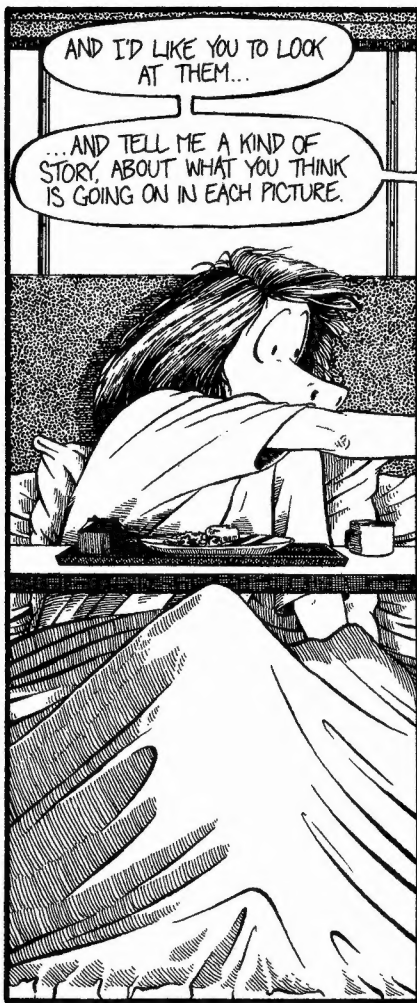
IT'S JUST PROCEDURE. WE WANT TO MAKE SURE YOU'RE OKAY PHYSICALLY AND MENTALLY BEFORE WE TURN YOU LOOSE.

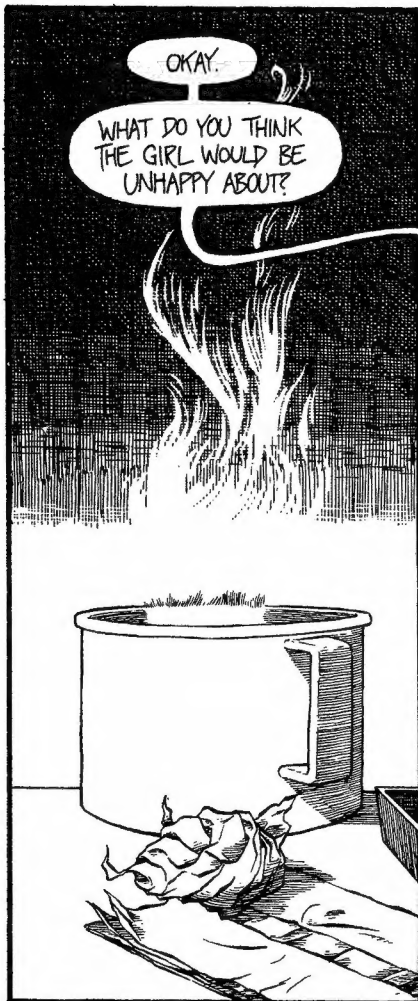


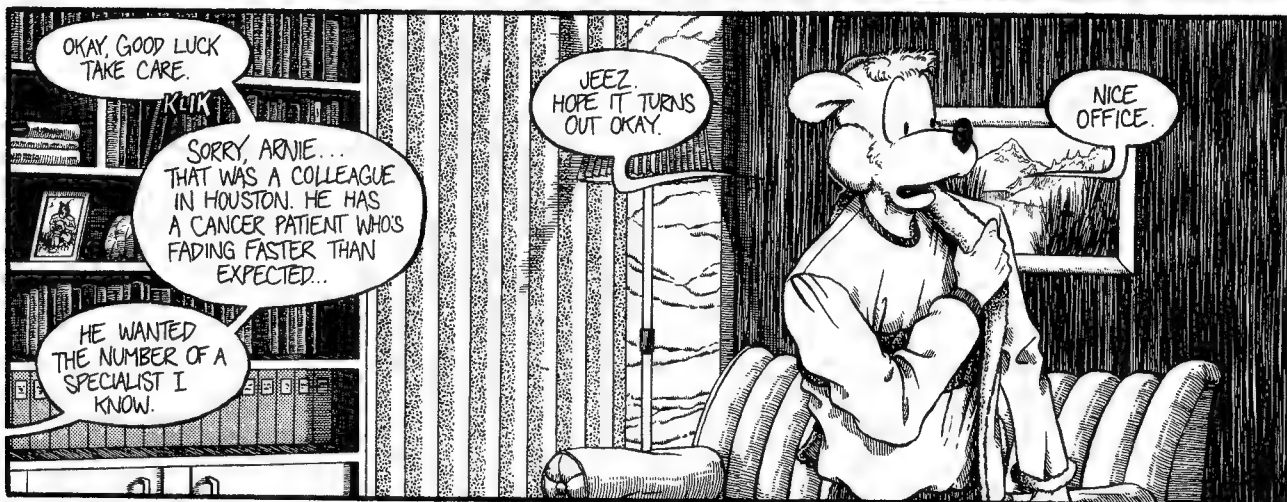
AND BE ABLE TO ADD AN EXTRA TREAT TO THE BILL.
WELL, YOU'RE THE DOCTOR, DOCTOR.

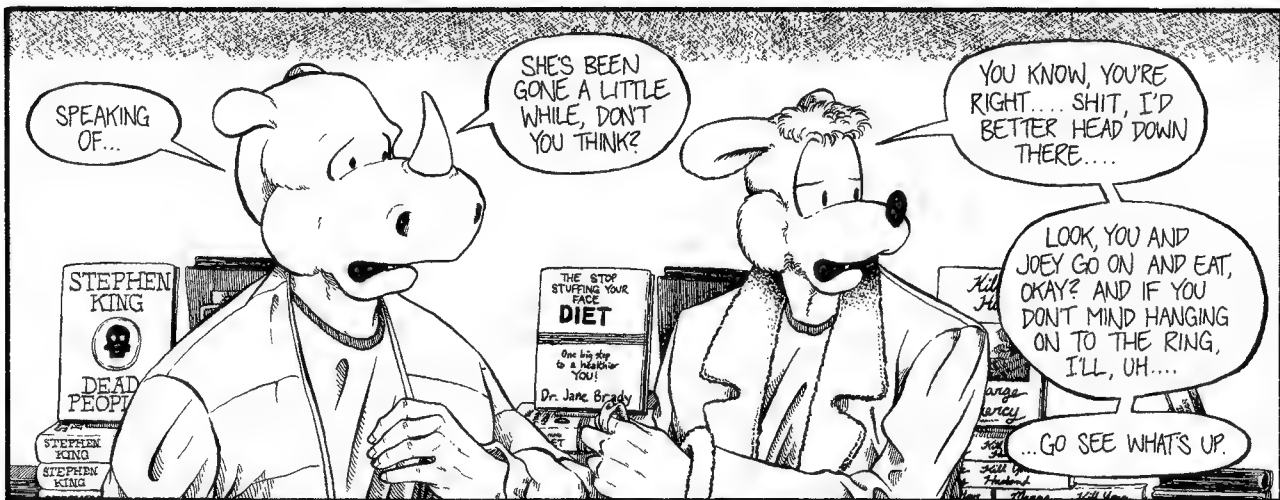
HEH, HEH. THIS WON'T TAKE MORE THAN A FEW MINUTES...

WHAT I'VE GOT IS A STACK OF PICTURES... DRAWINGS, PHOTOGRAPHS...











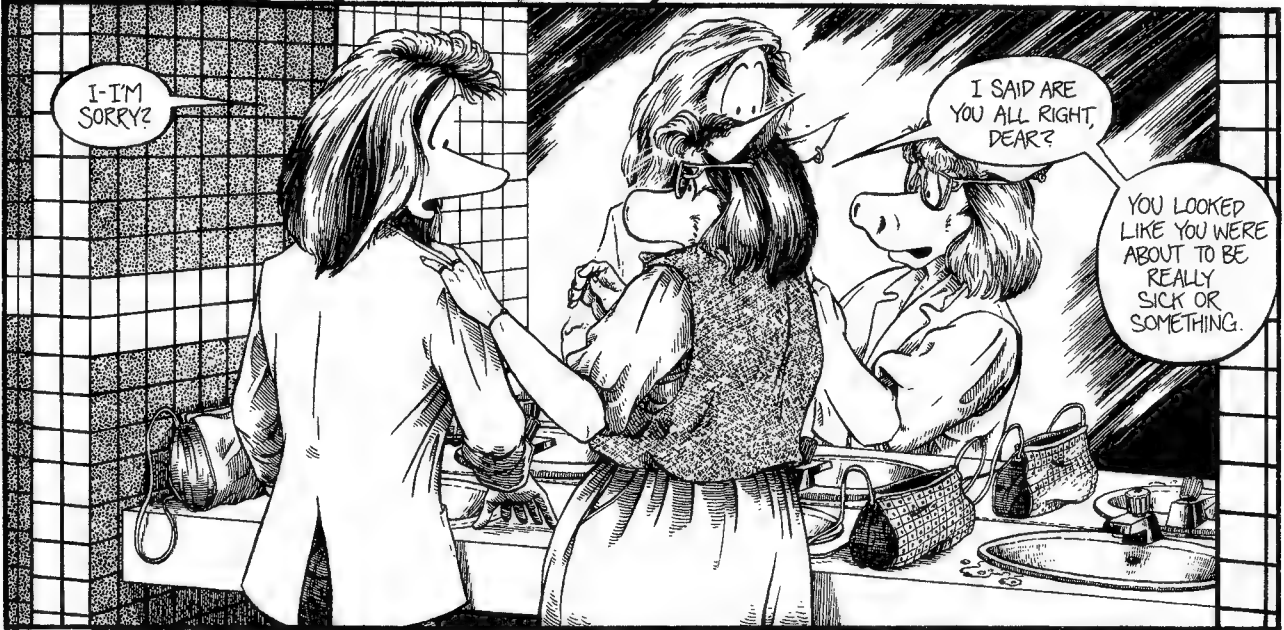
JESUS CHRIST, ERICA...
YOU STUPID BITCH...

WHY DID YOU RUN
LIKE THAT? WHAT IF HE
SAW YOU...?
...FOLLOWED YOU?

SHOULDA STAYED
WITH THE GUYS.

WHAT IF HE KNOWS
EXACTLY WHERE
YOU ARE?

IMPASSION?



I-I'M
SORRY?

I SAID ARE
YOU ALL RIGHT,
DEAR?

YOU LOOKED
LIKE YOU WERE
ABOUT TO BE
REALLY
SICK OR
SOMETHING.



OH...

NO, I'LL BE FINE...
JUST THIS MIGRAINE. THAT
KEEPS COMING BACK.

OOOH...
WELL, IF YOU
LIKE, I'VE
GOT SOME
PRESCRIPTION
STRENGTH
MIDOL...

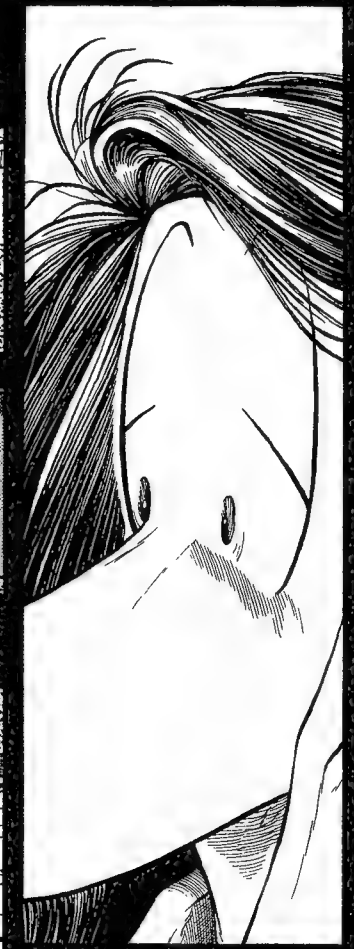
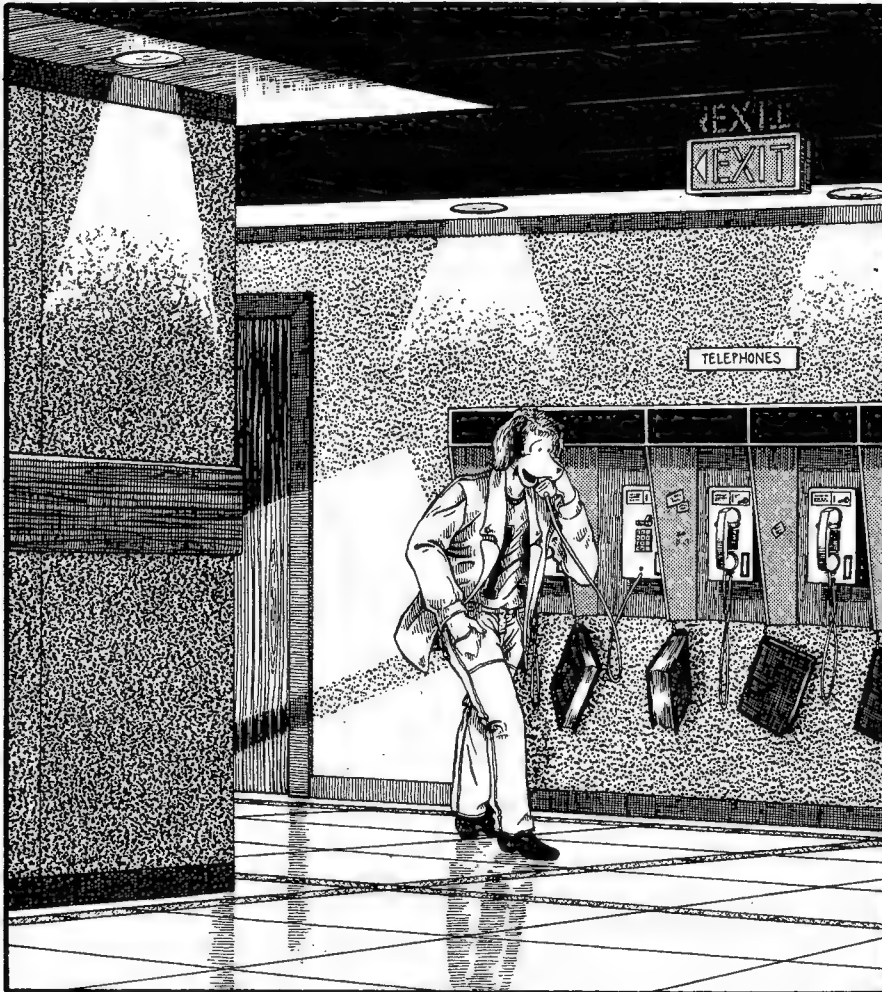
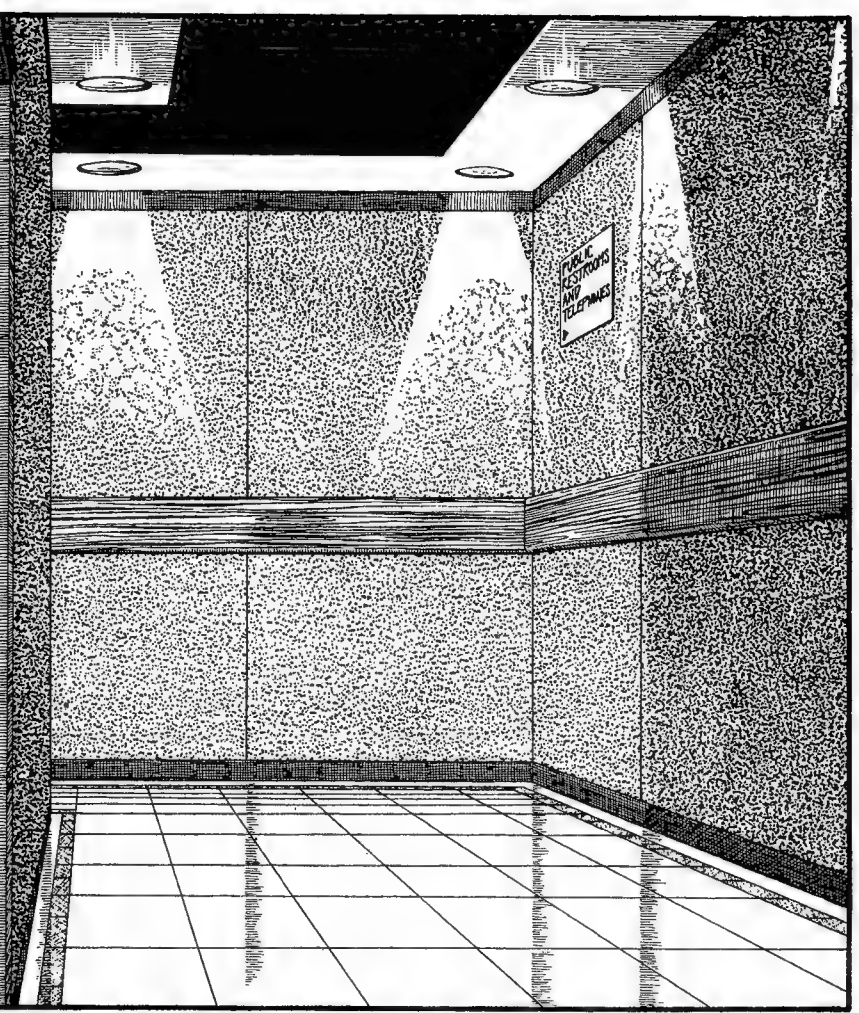
IT WORKS,
I TELL YOU!
MY HUSBAND
EVEN TAKES
IT FOR HIS MI-
GRAINES!

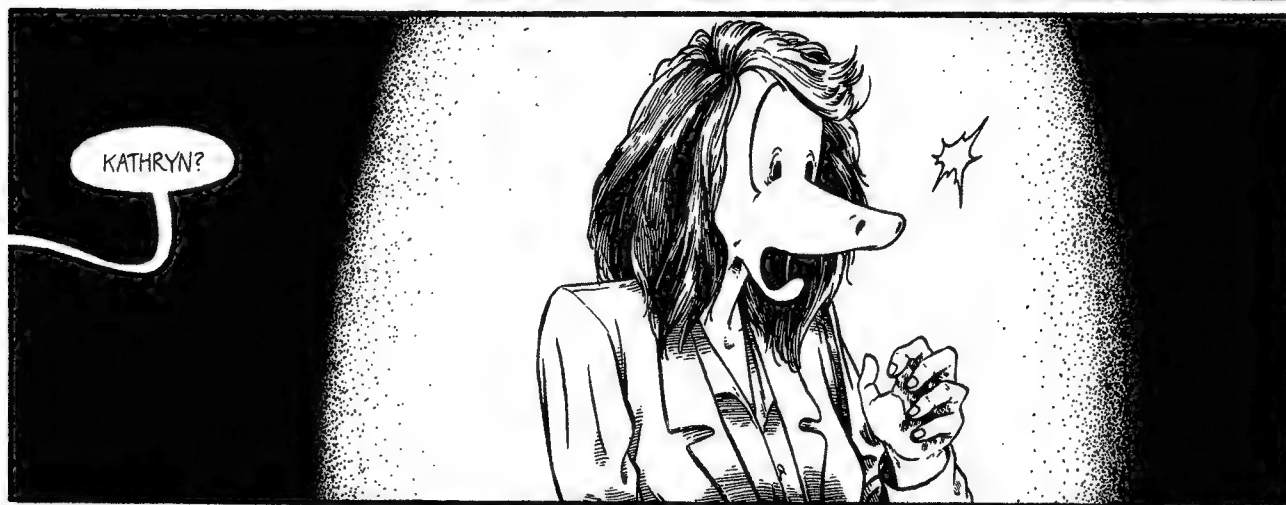
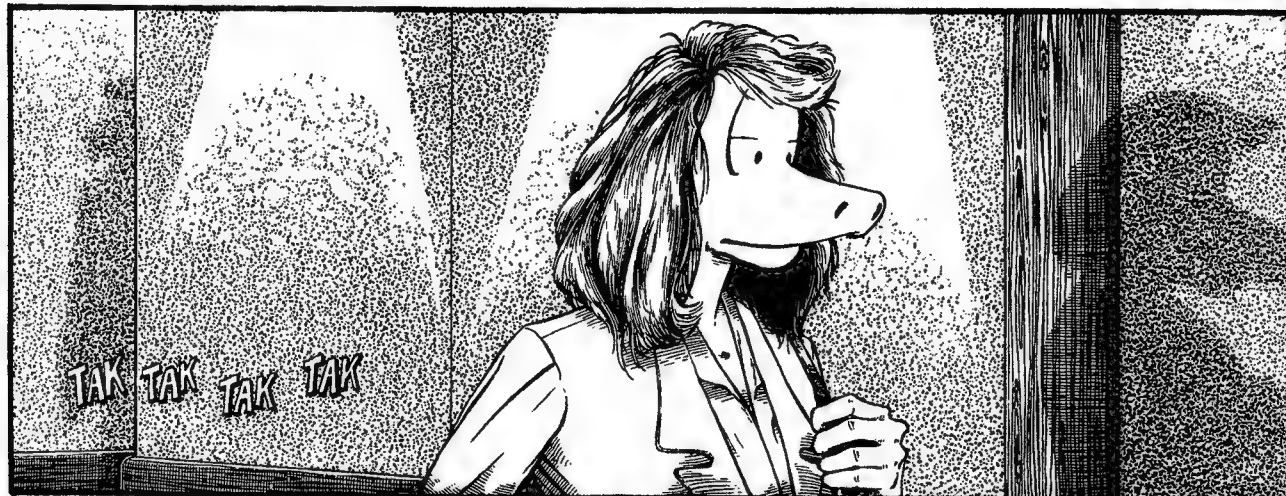


NO... NO... THANK
YOU, THOUGH.

OKAY, SUIT
YOURSELF.
I'M TELLING YOU.
I MAY HAVE ME A
HEADACHE BEFORE
ALL THIS SHOPPING
IS DONE... I MEAN
IT'S A GOOD THING...

CREEEEAK



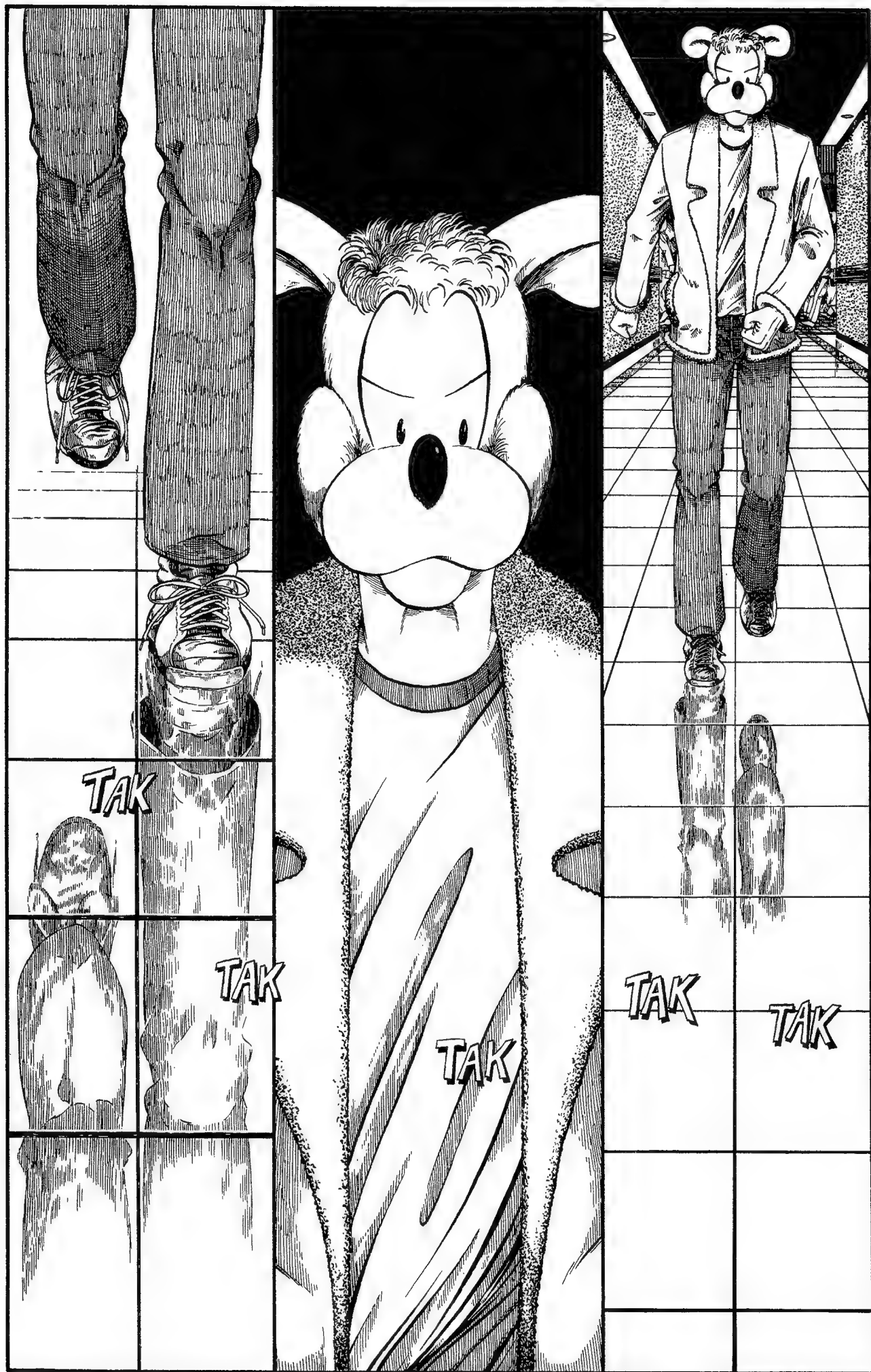


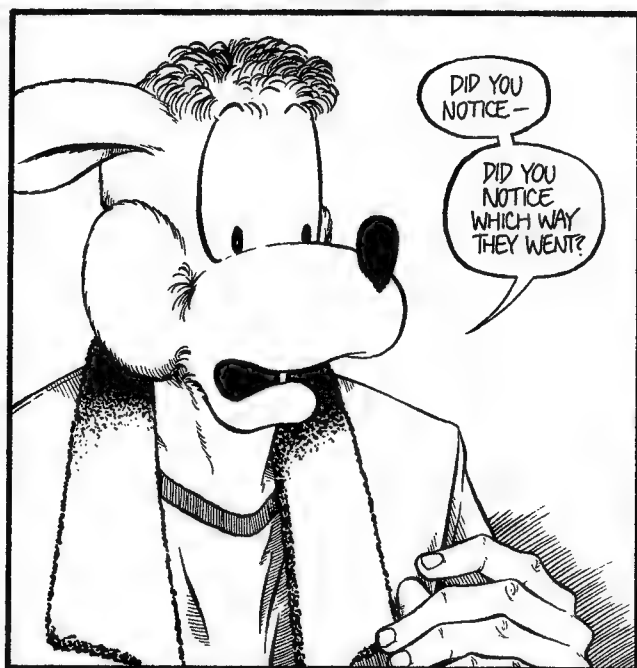
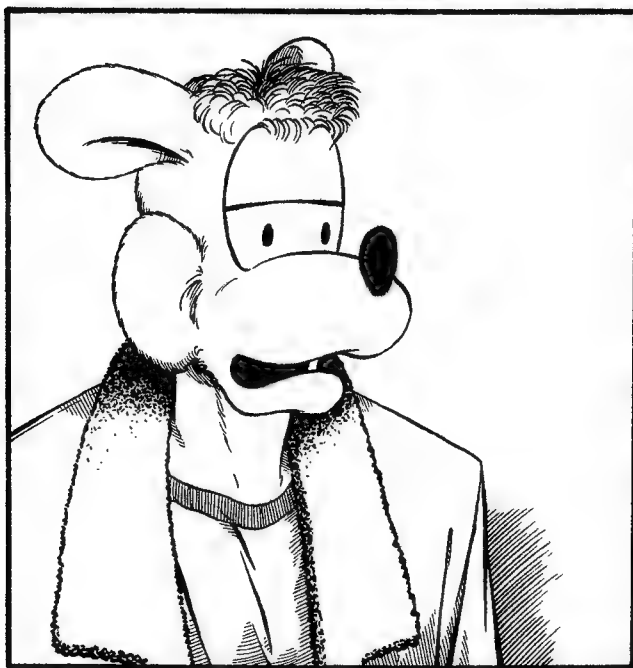
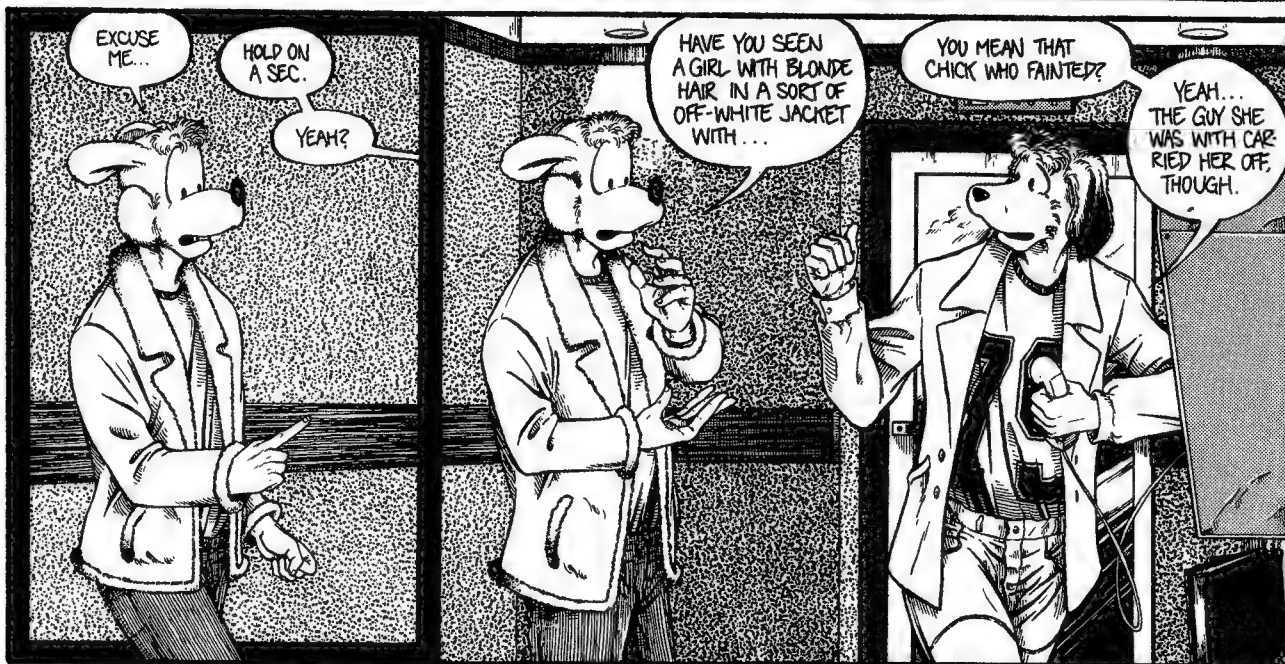
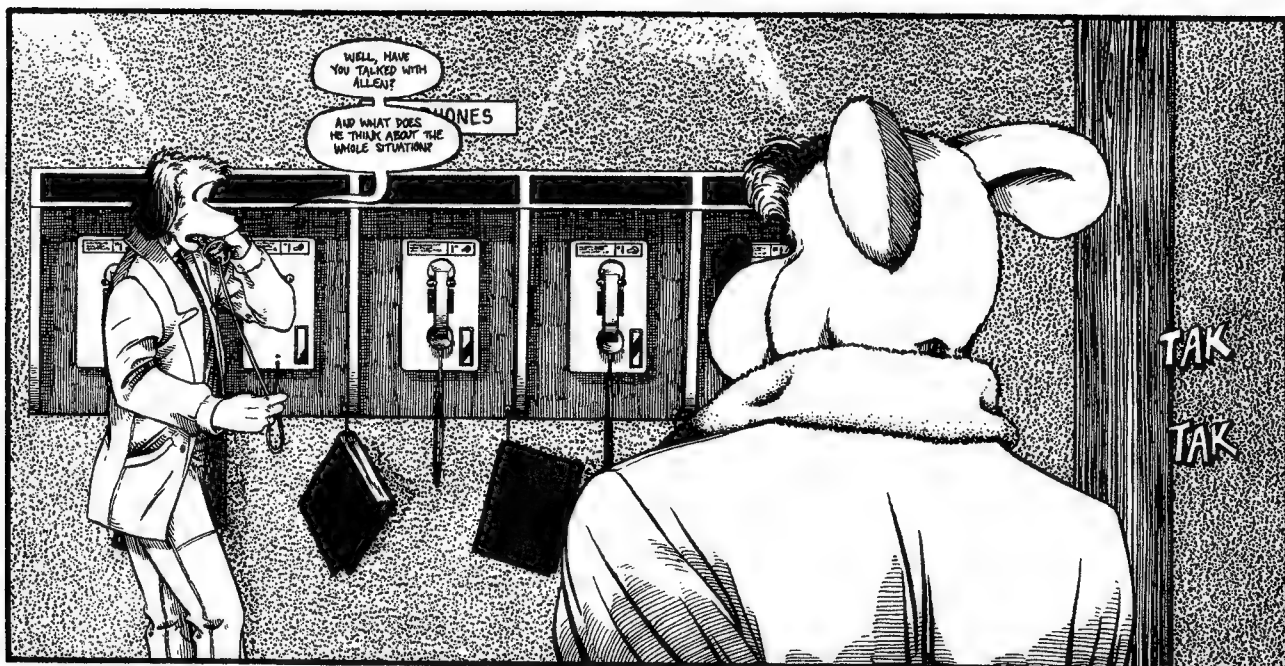
OH MY
GOODNESS!

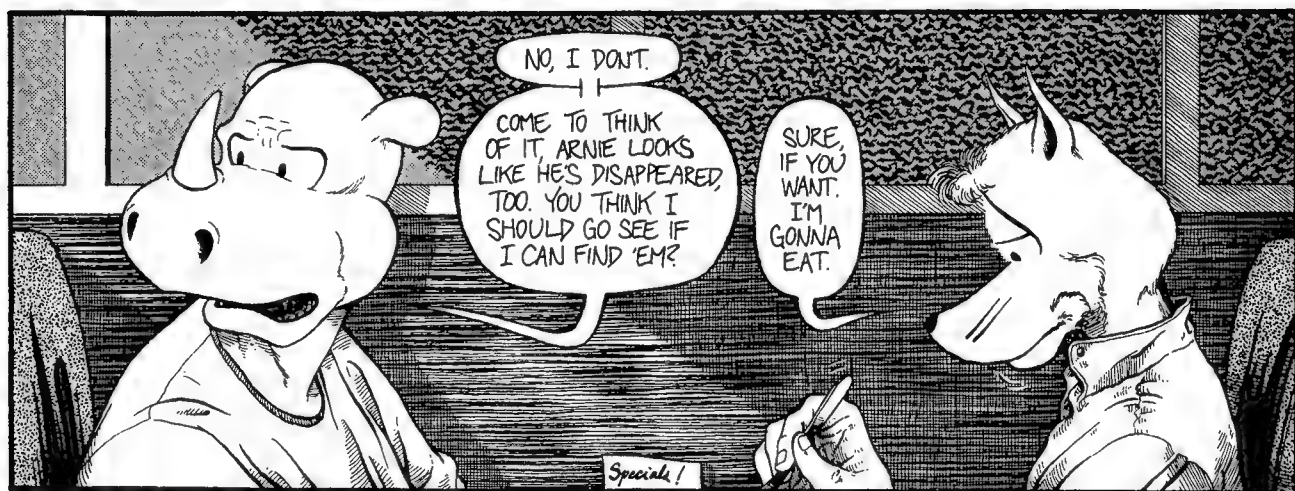
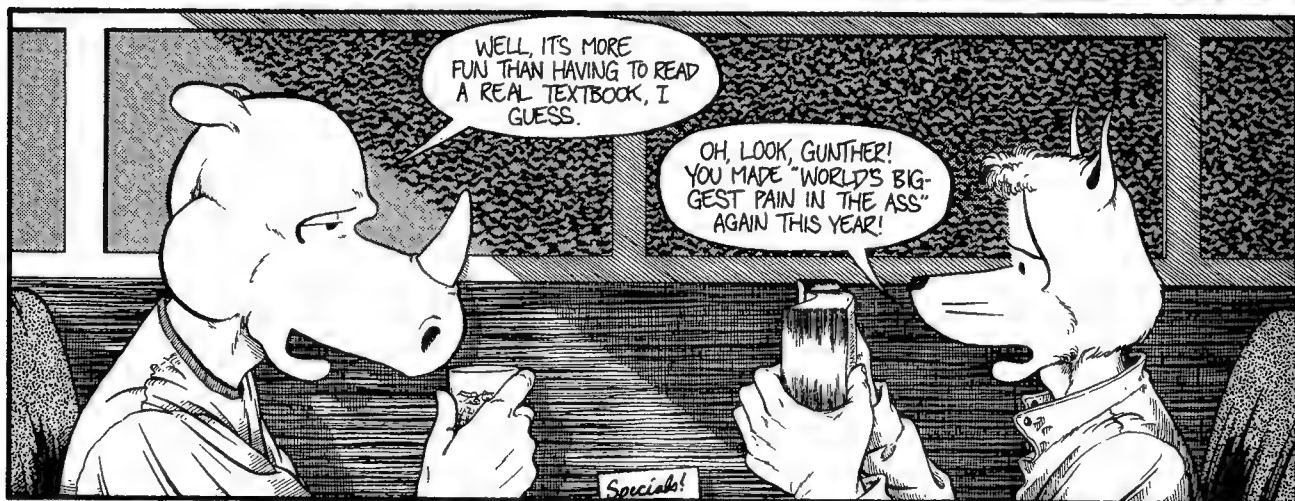


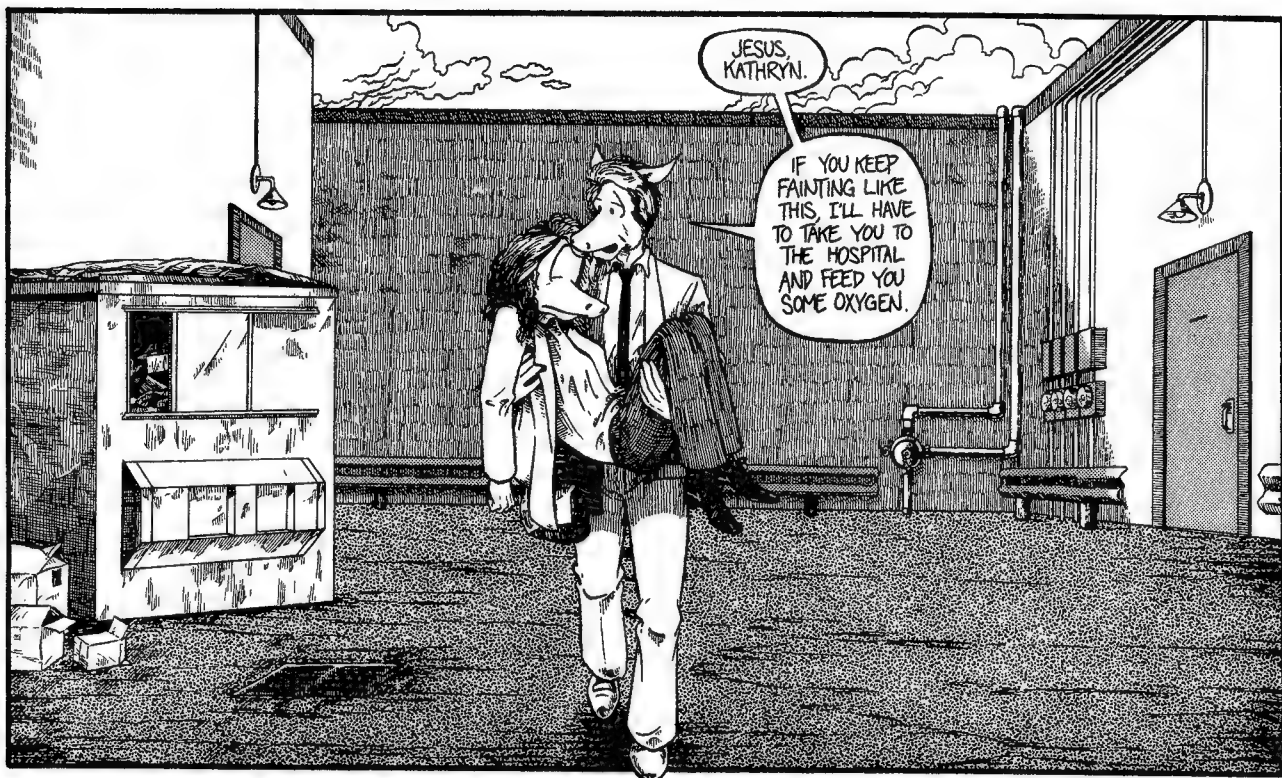
SHE'LL BE ALL
RIGHT—SHE'S JUST FAINTED.
SHE HASN'T BEEN FEELING
WELL LATELY.

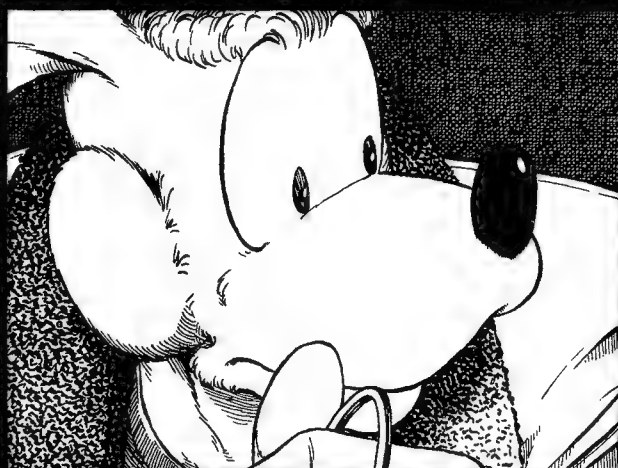
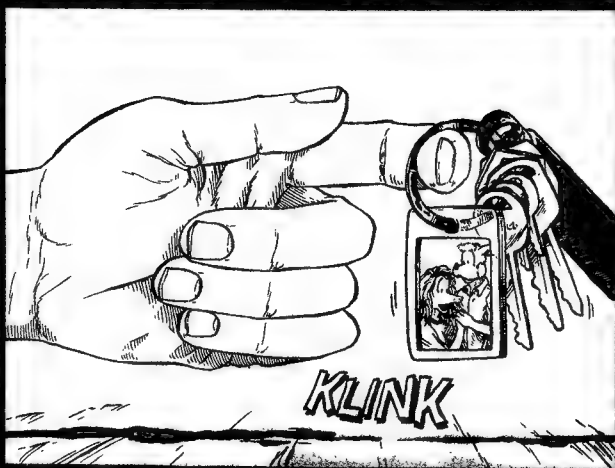
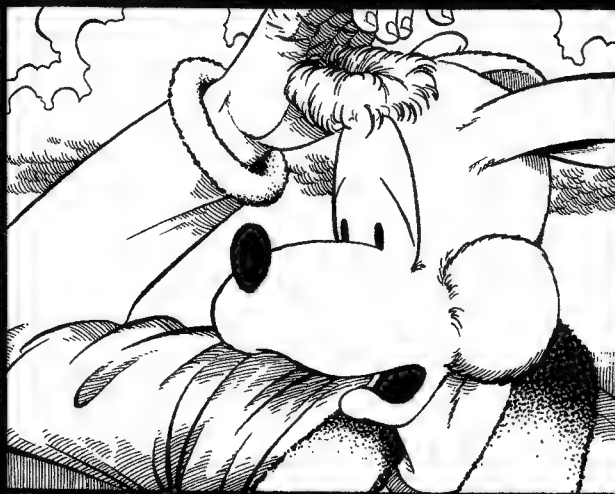
I JUST NEED TO
TAKE HER HOME AND
PUT HER TO BED.

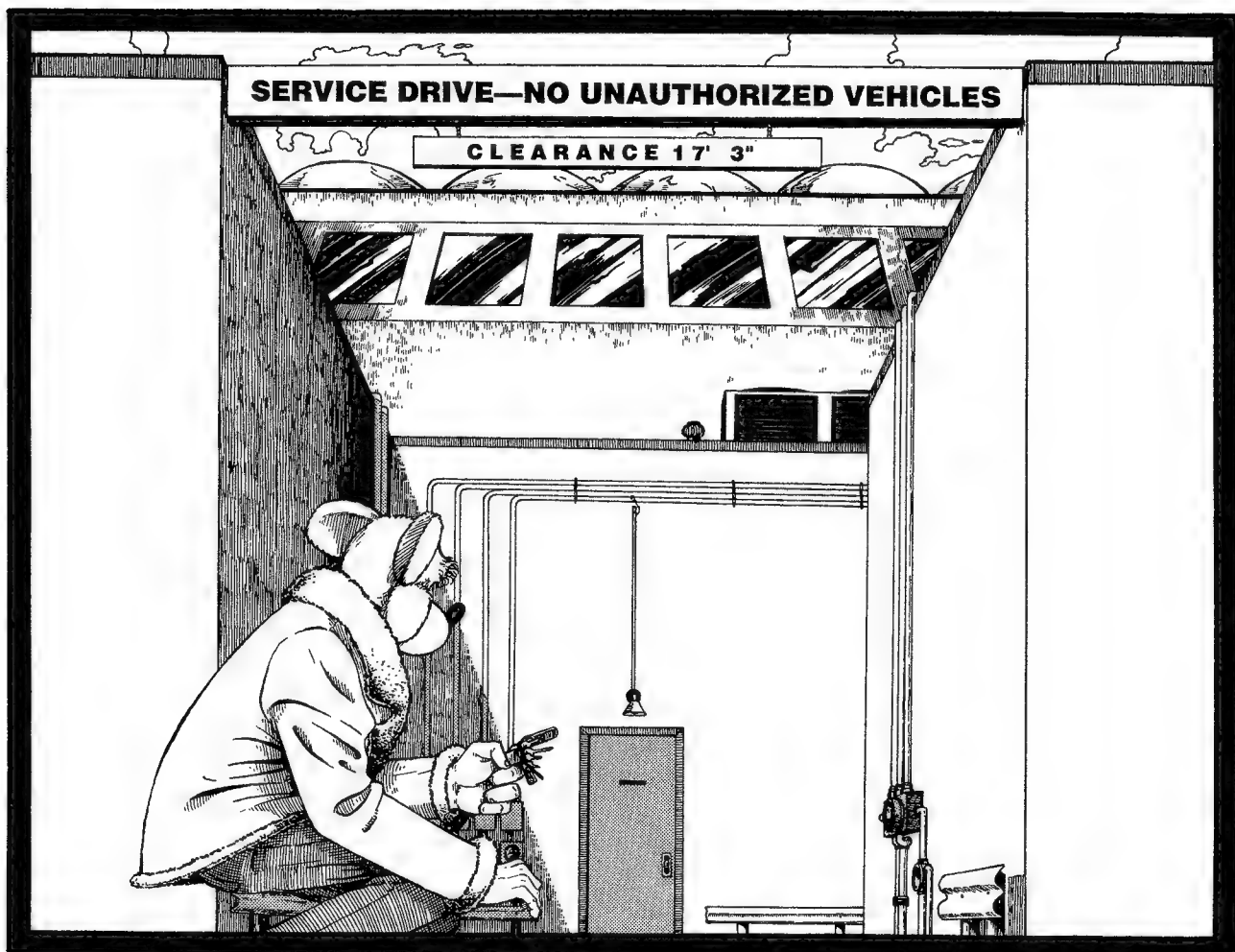


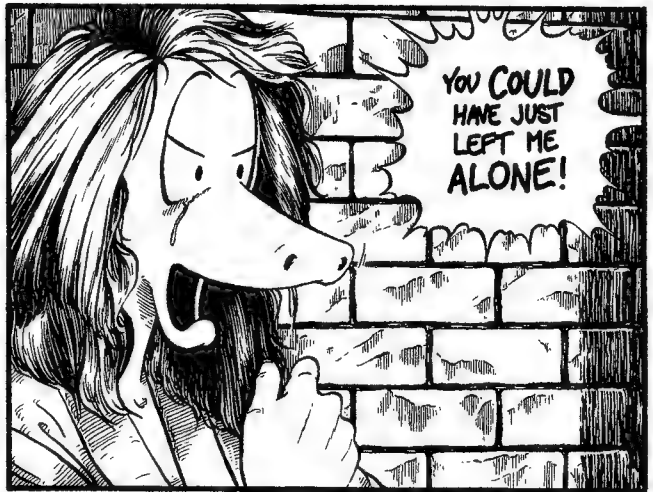














NEXT

Straight,

No Chaser

DEAR *hepcats*

7117 WOOD HOLLOW, #1728
AUSTIN, TEXAS 78731

Dear Mr. Wagner,

Please find enclosed my money order for \$11.00, being for **Yo**. I saw **Hepcats** number 1 in my local comic store and decided to buy. I found it very entertaining, humorous and the art-work very good. Black and white comics seem to be gaining popularity, and I am pleased with the standards you have set for other books. I especially like the playful feud between Gunther and Joey. "This stupid friggin' thing ate my quarters again!" "Well did you think of using the stupid friggin' wash selector?" Classic! I hope Joey meets the girl who said "Hi" to him at the end of book 1 again. Keep up the great work, yours until **Hepcats** grow old and into Lapcats,

SHAWN MARKS
NARANGBA,
QUEENSLAND,
AUSTRALIA

*Well, I don't know about black-and-whites as a whole gaining popularity—the majors are squeezing hard—but I'm excited to see that **Hepcats**, at least, is gaining some popularity. Especially Down Under.*

Martin!

From a true admirer, and perhaps, comic-artist hopeful... Hmmm—Your methods and design are definitely keen (good word, keep it in circulation I say—) and unique. Congratulations belated on your marriage and stuff (Augh! What

am I saying—) Well, the truth is I would've maybe asked you to marry me. Well, be happy—and keep crankin' out **Hepcats**. It's very honest. I like that.

Happy Valentine's Day♥

CINDY DAUER
SARASOTA, FL

Aw, shucks. Now what I want to know is, does John Byrne get letters like this?

Dear Mr. Wagner,

Hepcats is outstanding, an amazing piece of work. The second issue even helped me come to terms with some of my own personal problems, and I thank you for it.

By the way, **Hepcats** is the only comic my girlfriend will read voluntarily!

Thanks!

GEORGE WASHINGTON III
EVANSTON, IL

George, your girlfriend has impeccable taste. But then, you already knew that, didn't you?

Dear Martin;

Let's get right down to brass tacks, **Hepcats** is the most freshly original comic to come down the chute since *Usagi Yojimbo* and *Space Ark*.

(What??)

Be that as it may...The (sometimes) trying friendship between Joey

and Gunther frighteningly mirrors that between a friend of mine and myself (I'll not mention who's who for fear of evisceration...look *that* up in your Funk & Wagnall's, kiddies)! Needless to say, it's a grin, a chuckle, and a knowing nod.

What more can I say?! Crisp artwork, intelligent dialogue and characters rich in development. The *Snowblind* saga has gotten off to an interesting start. I know I'll be hanging about long after the story ends!

Gee. Have I spouted off too much about the *good* side of **Hepcats**? I *do* have one complaint, though. That is: I can't *find* one complaint about this book! (Ooo...I can tell *you're* upset.) (Grin.)

Keep on going, Martin; you're doing fine.

Peace;

MARK MCGRATH
NEW BEDFORD, MA

Oh, yeah, P.S.: Enclosed is \$11.00 for a copy of **Yo**. (I hope there are some copies left...better yet...I hope I've bought the *last* copy!)

P.P.S.: Just a note to tell you that I noticed a "similarity" between your advert of **Yo** and an album cover by Peter Gabriel... Fan of his, by any chance?

P.P.P.S.: Congratulations on thy betrothal. May it be long and happy!

Thank you. Marriage is just like a comic book, though. Uh, I mean, it takes a lot of work, you know.

Dear Mr. Wagner,

Congratulations to you and Tifanie and to the success of **Hepcats**! My husband has been a comic book collector for about 15 years and in the past has had little luck in convincing me to get involved. I hate to admit it (esp. to him) but after reading 1 and 2 of **Hepcats** and also the 1st issue of *Snowblind*, I am actually and irrevocably hooked! They are totally cool and by far my favorite. We *both* love it and can't wait for more!! Thank you!

Enclosed is the money for our

HEPCATS & AARDVARKS

CEREBUS 130 is the one with the eight-page *Hepcats* back-up, kids. Most of the pages are excerpted from prior issues, but one page features some rare *Daily Texan* art I've never reprinted before.

CEREBUS BI-WEEKLY 17, which came out last summer, had the Single Page which first caught everyone's eye. Since the original repro was so bad, though, I will rerun this one someday.

order of 5 **Yo** books. Forever fans,
VIKKI & MICHAEL CREECH
WEST HOLLYWOOD, CA

Dear Martin,

Congratulations on **Hepcats**. It is quite an impressive accomplishment in graphic storytelling, judging by the vast marketplace majority of comicbook pap product. I selfishly wish you all the success your fine product (service!) deserves.

As an author expanding my writing horizons to include a graphic serial akin to yours, I am painfully acquainted with the difficulties of graphic storytelling. The dialogue has to mean so much more and be so much less, while narrative must be rendered graphically. You do it beautifully.

I am not a serious collector of comics, let alone the 'funny animal' type as my particular taste does not include the 'visit the author's intellect and leave yours at the door, please' schlock. However, **Hepcats** is neither, as my initial perusal informed me. It is a graphic serial alike to those of Chadwick, Los Bros. Hernandez, Sim and surpasses Stevens. I am not familiar with the storyline of *Open Season*, howbeit, since **Hepcats** was compared to it I shall endeavor to find and read this book.

...Ah, such is the power of art.
Cordially,

RICHARD WHIPPLE
DORVAL, QUEBEC

Dear Mr. Wagner:

Congratulations on a fascinating series. I'd heard about **Hepcats** from the little Diamond rag, *Previews*, but the local shops didn't get it, so I didn't try it. Some time later, I was searching through the racks at a store near me Grandparents' when I saw **Hepcats** nos. 1 and 2. Then, recently, I got number three from a comic shop up in Ottawa (yeah, Niall's shop). Number One was fascinating. Admittedly, the cover was a bit dull, but it served its primary purpose, i.e. introducing the characters. It did catch my eye, so you must have done something right. Number two was interesting, but I didn't care for it as much as #1. I don't know why; maybe I couldn't identify with the characters as well, maybe it was because it was a little quieter. Who knows? In any case, I thought they were both very good comics (and the best description of college life I'd seen since *Doonesbury*), and I was definitely looking forward to more.

Number three blew me away. Totally. I don't think I've read a better story in a long time. *This* is the sort of book I can show to strangers and say, "This is why I read comics." The hospital episode was great (not to mention one hell of a teaser), the second piece was as funny as the pool scene in #1, and the framing bits gave more character description in three pages than I've seen in four years of *X-Men*. "Nothing matters. Except Arnie."; "It would've been 10th grade 'cause that's when I ran away"; I could go on and on, but I think you get the point. Enclosed is my money order for **Yo** (if there are any left). Please keep telling this

story for as long as you can; I'll be here for the whole ride.

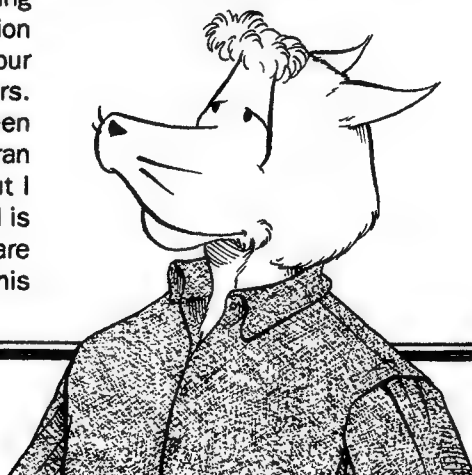
Thanks,

STEVEN STADNICKI
POTSDAM, NY

P.S. That computer network that Niall MacConaill mentioned in his letter in Number 3 is a little bit bigger than a BBS; at last count, there were some 250 thousand people on the Internet, and probably at least one or two thousand read the comics-oriented board, rec.arts.comics (which you should be hearing from, if Bob Mosley gets any questions for you).

P.P.S. Any chance that that link could work the other way, and you could somehow get on to the net yourself? It'd be nice to have a slightly different professional's point of view (Peter David is the only 'big-time' pro on the board).

Wow. I had no idea you guys were all on the same network. It's not a small world after all; it's a larger-than-usual pebble. Actually, Bob has talked with me several times, ages ago, about doing an interview over the net, which I think would be interesting, but so far he hasn't managed to contact me with anything definite.



GOOD OLD DAVE PART XXVIII

Howdy sir—

Well, I just picked up **Hepcats** #3 (actually it was several weeks ago—I've been...uh...busy. Yeah, that's it; busy) and found it to be quite enjoyable. To be honest, tho', I wasn't going to get it until I remembered it as being one of the better "Single Page"s in Sim's *Cerebus* [Bi-weekly], and his letter to you convinced me to buy your magazine. Probably sick of hearing that, aren't you? Oh well—look at the bright side; there's bound to be one somewhere. In any case, I enjoyed #3 enough to order a **Yo** book, and to ask if you have any of #1 and #2 lying around that you'd like to send as well. I can't find either around here.

Thanks—

THEODORE MERRITT
URBANA, IL

Dear Martin,

I just picked up your comic in the comic book store I work in (Same Bat Channel). So far I've read the first three issues and what can I say? FANTASTIC! To say the least, I was very impressed. To see the flood of awful comics come in every week, this was a happy surprise.

I immediately sympathized with Joey. He and I are one. Especially the last three pages. It's even funnier to think that Gunther acts just like my ex-best friend.

I have enclosed a money-order for my own copy of **Yo**. Hope there are some left.

The real life story line was great. Much more realistic than *Omaha* in which on every other page someone is having sex. I've never come across a book with so much "realism." I love it. And even humor too!

Thank you for a comic I can really enjoy and relate to.

Well, anyway—congratulations on a job well done. May you do **Hepcats** until the proverbial "pigs fly." I am sure you will succeed where

others have failed.

By the way, *Snowblind* looks like a really fascinating story. Did the story jump from #2 directly to #3 or was there some time in-between?

Sincerely,

PAUL C. SPARKS
PITTSFIELD, MA

P.S. Do you need a positive I.D. with this money-order? I'd be glad to give a "quick urine sample."

The money order is just fine, thank you.

Dear Martin,

Let me be the umpteenth person to congratulate you on your success with **Hepcats**. I'm sure modesty (and independents usual stability (??) with dealers) prevents you from becoming too cavalier.

I totally agree with your assessment that the only way an independent can succeed is by grassroot fan involvement. In my case, I had to do everything short of water torture to get my dealer to carry **Hepcats** on a regular basis, but they have!! In fact, they sold every copy within two weeks and are trying to get more.

In the mean time, I'm putting my money order where my mouth is and am requesting five copies of both #2 and #3 (I've heard that #1 has sold out, WAYTO GO!). Then I can browbeat my friends into reading some superior material.

I'm also sending an additional \$11.00 for a copy of **Yo**.

Sorry about turning into a comic vigilante in my letter but I thought a fan needed to add the proverbial "boot in the ass" comments to prevent reader apathy and get things moving.

Lastly, please accept as a hopeful good luck charm for increased readership in the New York area this **Hepcats** New York license plate with my gratitude for a great comic. All my best.

BOB FONDA
FLUSHING, NY

I wanted to get "HEPCATS" vanity plates for my car, but Texas plates only have six characters—so I tried instead to get HEP-CATS for my phone number when I moved into #1728 here, but the Southwestern Bell lady told me I couldn't have the 437 prefix. Phooey on them, I decided. So thanks again, Bob, for the plate.



copy of your collection.

Keep it up, I'll keep buying 'em.

W/ admiration,

RYAN ALEXANDER
MINNEAPOLIS, MN

I must say, that has to be the coolest congratulatory comment Tif and I have gotten so far.

Dear M.W.:

Just read issue 1-3 of **Hepcats**. What a strange comic! I see nothing of *Doonesbury* in it; it seems to be the bastard son of *Jaka's Story* and *Omaha*, with significant departures from both. Good draftsmanship, too—actually, well-nigh excellent draftsmanship. I am of the school that holds that a comic ought to be drawn well, unless it is an unreal work like *Stickboy*, which is simple but well-drawn anyway, or *Cynical-man*, which makes no pretension. **Hepcats** does make pretensions, quite pretentious ones, but seems to deserve them. Obviously this Mr. Wagner is a proponent of Ringer's Leapfrog Theory. It does seem a bit early to begin a long graphic novel in issue 3. However, I cannot but wish you well.

I must now offer some criticisms of this nascent strip. (The cautious negativism of this letter is intentional. I once tried to flatter a mad artist in Seattle; he took everything I said the wrong way, refuted my flatteries point-by-point, accused me of making a death threat, allowed my brother's subscription to his magazine to lapse (with no refund), then wiggled out altogether and vanished, having also produced only one issue. No more flattery for me! It's the George Bush Watch & Wait Program for this reviewer.)

Anyway, on to the gentle criticisms:

1. Find your 9-digit Zip Code, for Pete's sake! It really does speed up delivery time marginally.

2. Your characters, especially in #3, occasionally opened their mouths too widely to maintain a natural expression. I refer *not* to the

upper right panel on the first page in which Dr. Stevens is seen; this works for some reason. I refer to panels like the lowest one on the next page. I don't know why this bothers me; perhaps a wide open mouth seems camivorous, like Ford Prefect's smile.

3. The character's eyes are awfully free-form, elongated, and tenuous. This is great for readers of the original strip, but it is a little off-putting to us new readers; it looks like the characters have hollow foreheads. Look at some old *Cerebus Swords* [sic] and see what Sim did with his original, free-form Cerebus; without losing the effect, Sim managed to make Cerebus' connected eyes and separated mouth a lot more believable by modifying his head a bit (though the effect is still a little Cyclopean). Or look at some very early *Doonesbury*; originally B.D. didn't even have a chin, and the eyes were sometimes hard to pick out.

4. You use the time-honored character-turns-to-leave-but-other-character-calls-out-for-him-to-wait-so-he-turns-around-and-then-the-first-character-delivers-a-closer scene once too often in #3. That scene has become way to [sic] overused by scripters in all visual media; if you keep using it it will bomb on you!

Well, so much for the heated criticism. You surely did take it well.

By the way, I'd like to order a copy of *Yo* if any are still available. If not, hold onto the money for the mythical "second edition." Also, are you defunct? I ask because issue #4 is not here yet, though it was supposed to be issued 10/89.

Yours without malice aforethought,

DON WEATHERWAX
ESPARTO, CA

P.S.: A "[?]" in the letters page of #3 seemed to indicate that you didn't know who Erma Felna, EDF was. Erma is the title character in the main strip of the magazine *Albedo*, published by Thoughts and Images, P.O. Box 15168, Portland, OR 97215 and written by Steve Gallacci, the "mad artist in Seattle" mentioned

above. Note that Gallacci also wrote "Birthright" in *Critters*, and "Birthright" is in the same universe as that in *Albedo*. "Erma Felna EDF" is an anthropomorphic space-opera, giving equal attention to characterization to characterization and hardware. The universe is solid and believable (in fact, it has inspired the *Albedo* role-playing game), the art is superb, and the dialogue is perfect at its best and downright stilted at its worst. You really ought to look into it. *Warning: do not try to compliment Mr. Gallacci in any way!*

I can't really describe Steve's work very well, but I will say this: it resembles a Russian novel. In its uneven pacing, its intense treatment of some characters and stereotyping of others, its depiction of society in transition, its even-handed portrayal of violence and peace, it *very closely resembles* the novel *And Quiet Flows the Don* by Mikhail Sholokhov, to the extent that I think Gallacci must have read this novel sometime long ago. "Birthright" also resembles this novel.

Okay, let me see if I've got this down.

Get a 9-digit ZIP Code. Not having one affects your storytelling capabilities. Got it.

Never use the same or a similar scene twice in the same issue, even if you're doing so on purpose to achieve, like, an effect or something, because it will just bomb on you. Got it.

Oh, and I like the bit about the eyes. "Free-form, elongated, and tenuous." Wow! Sounds like a girl I used to know.

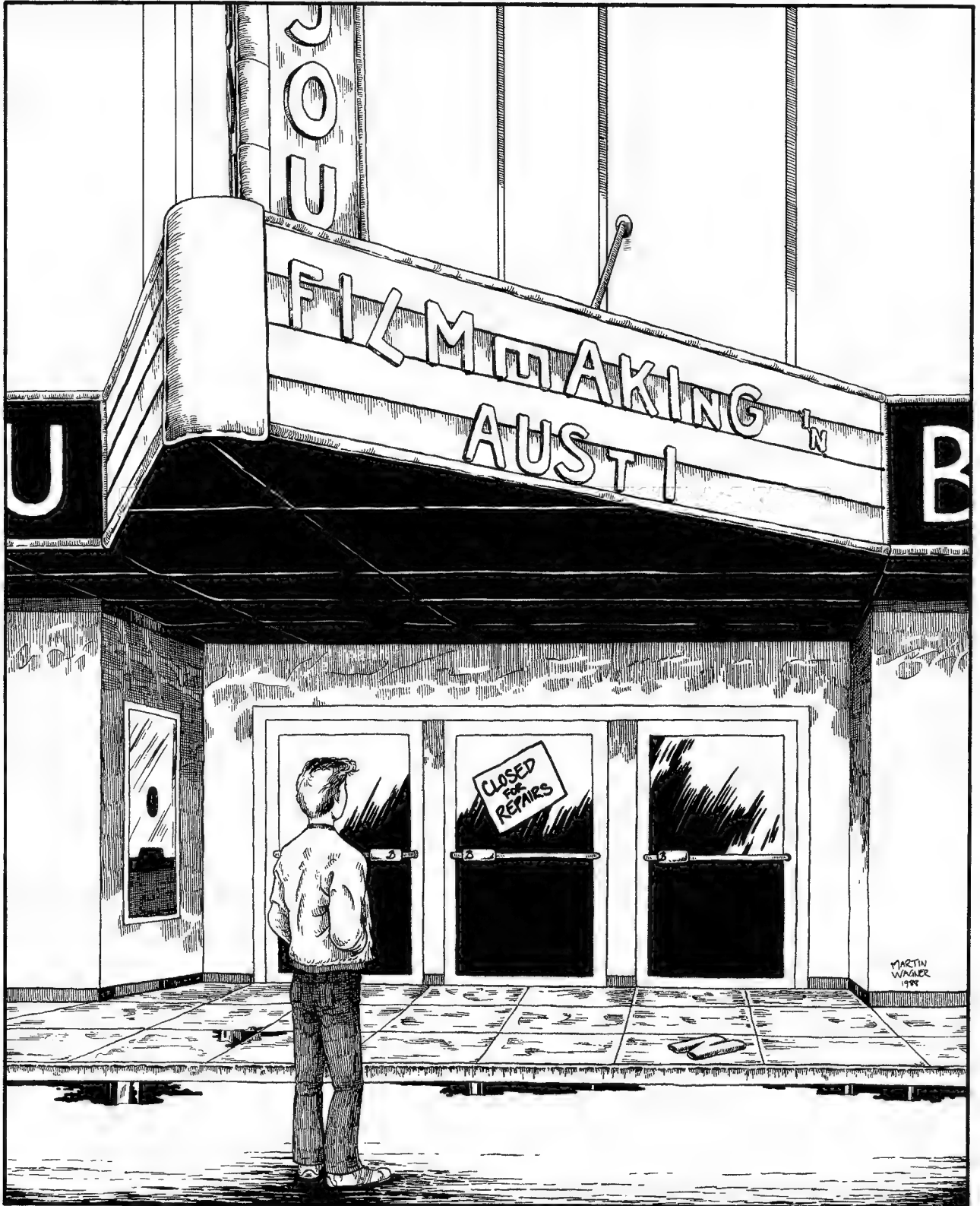
*And of course, Steve Gallacci hasn't published an *Albedo* in years, and it's all because of you! Boy! Well, one of the great mysteries of independent publishing has been solved, folks. You read it here first.*

Oh, by the way, Steve said he'd never heard of that Russian novel. Sorry. That's okay, it still sounded impressive.

And you have my permission to list the publication of this letter on your résumé.

SKETCHES AND STUFF

Once again, here is another collection of art from the *Daily Texan* days, and before. This piece was the cover to an issue of *Images*, a weekly "arts and entertainment" tabloid published by the *Texan*. Originally there was spot coloring (red) in the marquee letters. There's a tranquillity to this piece that I really enjoy, and I also like it for the fact that it was a very smooth, quick drawing that I just let "come out." I drew the whole thing inside of four hours if memory serves. Which is fast as hell for me.



Here are some drawings from my sketchbook during my good old schooldays. Yes, there are a lot of girls in my sketchbook. Yes, it worked almost every time.





This *Hepcats* jam-parody ran on April 26, 1989, the day before I turned 23, and if you've read *Yo* you'll know the reference. The artists are, from left: me; Van Garrett (*Burnt Orange Blues*); Tom King (*The Magician*); and Robert Rodriguez (*Los Hooligans*). The pseudonymous "Neil Gregory" was a nasty reference to a UT art student who, only weeks before, had disgraced himself by clipping some comics by Chris Ware (*Floyd Farland*; *Raw* Vol. 2 No. 2) from the *Texan* and submitting them to a California skateboarding magazine under his own name.

Some like it hot!
THE DAILY TEXAN



This is a house ad I did for the *Texan*'s harrowing color comics supplement, which was published November 2, 1988. I think I got some kind of award or certificate for this but I'm not sure. I mean, awards flow through the *Texan* offices like water from all over everywhere, so pretty soon people lose track of what they won for what. Anyway, I've got this certificate on my wall and that's good enough for me.

a special 12 page section with color
WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 2

SHASTA SAYS. My very first published comic strip. I figured I'd dig a few out to show you. Like most college cartoonists at that time, I took a lot of my cues from the Garry/Burke school of wit. Mainly, the strip was topical as per campus issues at the time (for example, there really was, and probably still is, a student TV soap opera), so the strip is pretty irrelevant to anyone at all anymore—so there won't be, like, a book or anything. Also, "Shasta" was the name of the University of Houston's mascot, a cougar—hence, the origin of my "cats."

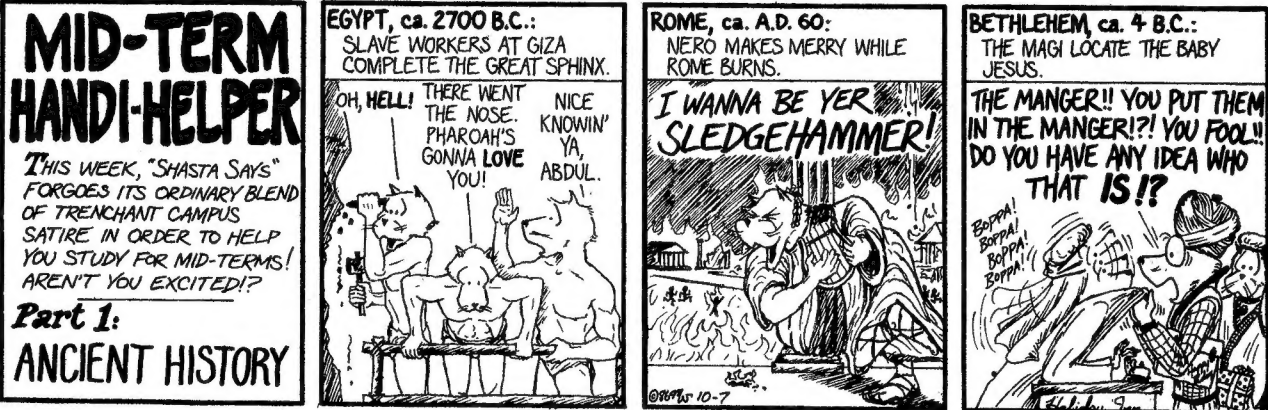
SHASTA SAYS by MARTIN WAGNER



Debut strip. September 12, 1986.



September 24, 1986.



October 7, 1986.



October 8, 1986.

continued from inside front cover

order sketches will have to wait a little bit to get them, especially if the volume of requests is as high as I'm anticipating. But another point is that sketches aren't pages. I can take them anywhere, do them anytime, and do them much more efficiently time-wise than a page, where the work is purposefully agonizingly painstaking and requires hours sitting in one place ruining my back for later life. And at a recent sketch party held here in Austin at Dragon's Lair Comics, and announced with somewhat short notice, I still did \$200 worth of sketches in 5 hours (special thanks to Dave Wheeler and everyone else involved). The fact is, everyone who orders a sketch will get their sketch, of whichever character(s) they want, in color, with a little personalized note to them, suitable for framing, mailed flat with cardboard backing, etc., etc....

And they will have saved *Hepcats*.

And one more thing.

Since I determined that 400 sketches is the magic Save Hepcats number, I'm going to do something real special.

The minute I get my 400th sketch order, I'm going to put everybody's name in a big box. Then I'm going to draw eight names at

random.

Those eight people will get free lifetime subscriptions.

After that, for every 200 orders I get, I'll draw four more names.

And so on. And so on.

Current subscribers are eligible, too. If I draw one of your names I'll refund your sub money, that's all.

Sound good?

So please. If you'd like to keep reading this series for years on end, as much as I'd like to keep drawing it, please order a sketch, or something else *today*. This evening.

I'd like to be able to announce my first eight winners as early as next issue. Or ten winners. Or twelve.

Wouldn't that be cool?

Anyway, to close this spiel on a high note, I must say that the future, at least on the retail end, looks good for *Hepcats*. Orders are still consistent, which, I'm told, is 90% of the game, and in some areas they're increasing. And the recent *Cerebus* back-up does seem to have garnered some new readers. But the thing is I just have to get through the current dry spell, and, as I said, I can't do it alone. I need fans' help. It's the only way.

Please help *Hepcats*. Won't you?

COLOR SKETCHES

DRAWN ON BRISTOL IN INDIA INK AND DESIGN MARKER.

ONE OR TWO CHARACTERS **\$25.00**

FOUR CHARACTER GROUP PORTRAIT **\$40.00**

400 TWO-CHARACTER SKETCHES WILL **SAVE HEPCATS!** ORDER YOURS **TODAY!** YOU COULD BE ELIGIBLE FOR A **FREE LIFETIME SUBSCRIPTION!**

SUBSCRIPTIONS

12 ISSUES FOR **\$27.00**. CANADIAN RATE \$30.00. OVERSEAS RATE \$45.00 SENT AIRMAIL. PLEASE REMIT IN U.S. CURRENCY. ALL COPIES MAILED FLAT WITH A BACKING BOARD.

371 SUBSCRIPTIONS WILL **SAVE HEPCATS!** ORDER YOURS **TODAY!**

YO

\$11.00 U.S. \$14.00 CANADA. \$20.00 OVERSEAS. LET'S CLEAR 'EM OUT!

T-SHIRTS

ERICA IN A SUMMER SWIMSUIT POSE! ORDER YOURS IN ADVANCE!
\$15.00. SPECIFY M, L, XL.



DOUBLE
DIAMOND
P R E S S



Tif

HYDE PARK, LONDON, JULY 1989